

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

**IN RE: HURRICANE LAURA AND HURRICANE DELTA CLAIMS**

**ORDER APPOINTING ADDITIONAL NEUTRALS**

Effective this date, the court hereby appoints the following individuals as additional “neutrals” (mediators) in the Streamlined Settlement Process for Hurricane Laura and Delta Claims outlined in Case Management Order No. 1:

- Lottie L. Bash  
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**THUS DONE AND SIGNED** in Chambers on this 17th day of August, 2021.



JAMES D. CAIN, JR.  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

RECEIVED

11/12/2020

Tony R. Moore, Clerk  
Western District of Louisiana  
Shreveport, Louisiana  
By: KEA

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

IN RE: HURRICANE LAURA AND HURRICANE DELTA CLAIMS  
CASE MANAGEMENT ORDER NO. 1

**INTRODUCTION**

On August 27, 2020, Hurricane Laura came ashore near Cameron Parish, Louisiana. As a Category 4 (near 5) hurricane, it was the fifth strongest storm to ever impact the United States.<sup>1</sup> Hurricane Laura caused the deaths of at least 42 people, damaged over 400,000 structures, and inflicted over \$14 billion in damage to western Louisiana and southeastern Texas.<sup>2</sup> Hurricane-force winds extended inward for well over 100 miles and inflicted catastrophic damage within the area of the Court's jurisdiction. Included in this devastation was the Edwin F. Hunter, Jr. United States Courthouse in Lake Charles, which served the most severely impacted parishes in the Western District of Louisiana. The devastation to the courthouse may necessitate a complete rebuilding, which will take significant time.<sup>3</sup>

On October 9, 2020, Hurricane Delta, a Category 2 storm, struck the same area impacted six weeks earlier by Hurricane Laura and caused additional damage of at least \$4 billion.<sup>4</sup> These storms are sometimes hereinafter referred to as the Hurricanes and the causes of action arising thereunder are sometimes hereinafter referred to as the "Hurricane Cases." Since Hurricane Delta's landfall, the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana has become, and presumably will continue to be, inundated with insurance coverage-related litigation linked to the Hurricanes. The devastation in the parishes of the Lake Charles Division, including to the Courthouse itself, is anticipated to interfere with the timely handling of this litigation.

The Court desires, within the powers granted unto it, to prevent increased difficulties to the parties involved, to bring as much of this litigation to resolution as expediently and justly as possible, and to allow Southwest Louisiana to move forward with its recovery.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeff Masters, *Devastating Laura Is Tied as the Fifth-strongest Hurricane on Record to Make Landfall in the Continental U.S.*, YALE CLIMATE CONNECTIONS (Aug. 27, 2020), available at <https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2020/08/devastating-laura-tied-as-fifth-strongest-hurricane-to-make-landfall-in-continental-u-s/>

<sup>2</sup> AON, *Global Catastrophe Recap* (Sep. 2020) at p. 11, available at [http://thoughtleadership.aonbenfield.com//Documents/20200810\\_analytics-if-september-global-recap.pdf](http://thoughtleadership.aonbenfield.com//Documents/20200810_analytics-if-september-global-recap.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Sen. John Kennedy, *Kennedy Plans New Lake Charles Courthouse After Hurricane Laura Destruction*, Press Releases (Sep. 8, 2020), available at <https://www.kennedy.senate.gov/public/2020/9/kennedy-plans-new-lake-charles-courthouse-after-hurricane-laura-destruction>

<sup>4</sup> AON, *Global Catastrophe Recap* (Oct. 2020) at p. 4, available at [http://thoughtleadership.aon.com/documents/20201111\\_analytics-if-october-global-recap.pdf](http://thoughtleadership.aon.com/documents/20201111_analytics-if-october-global-recap.pdf)

particular Hurricane Case have complied with the requirements of this Streamlined Settlement Process.

Discovery on a limited issue or in exceptional circumstances may be authorized by the Deputy Special Master. The exceptional circumstances as well as the scope and limits of any permitted discovery shall be determined by the Deputy Special Master in his discretion.

#### **SECTION 4. SPECIAL MASTER AND APPOINTED NEUTRALS**

IT IS ORDERED BY THE COURT, pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 53 (“FRCP 53”), that Patrick A. Juneau, Esq., is appointed Special Master, and that he shall proceed with all reasonable diligence and shall exercise his rights and responsibilities to direct the Streamlined Settlement Process as provided in this Order. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED BY THE COURT, pursuant to FRCP 53 that Cade R. Cole, Esq., is appointed as Deputy Special Master and that he shall proceed with all reasonable diligence and shall exercise his rights and responsibilities under the Streamlined Settlement Process and otherwise assist the Special Master as the Special Master may direct. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED BY THE COURT pursuant to L.R. 16.3.1 that the neutrals referenced in Section 3(II)(C) of this Order are hereby appointed and shall proceed with all reasonable diligence and shall exercise their rights and responsibilities under the Streamlined Settlement Process as the Special Master may direct.

##### **I. The Special Master**

The Special Master shall administer, coordinate, and preside over the SSP. This authority includes the power to order parties and/or party representatives with full power of settlement to submit briefing, engage in limited discovery, and attend settlement conferences and/or meetings.

##### **II. Compensation of Appointed Neutrals**

The Special Master, his deputy, and all other appointed neutrals under the SSP (the “Appointed Neutrals”) shall be compensated in the amount of:

- A. \$450 per hour for the Special Master;
- B. \$400 per hour for the Deputy Special Master and all other Appointed Neutrals;
- C. \$250 per case for the Special Master for administrative expenses in administering, scheduling, organizing, and coordinating the Streamlined Settlement Process for each case amongst the parties as well as with the Appointed Neutrals; and
- D. all actual expenses of the Appointed Neutrals, including but not limited to